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THE HAMILTON SUMMER SCHOOL

The Hamilton College Summer School of English, when I visited it last August, reminded me not a little, in one essential point, of the Conference of Teachers of English at Stratford-on-Avon, in 1914. The differences, of course, were many and obvious, not least that of setting, though the cluster of college buildings on the high, *cool* hilltop of central New York was almost as beautiful in its way as the red-tiled river village of Warwickshire. But the spirit of the two gatherings—and that, after all, is the essential matter—was singularly alike, a company of clever and earnest men and women, not large—seventy-five to a hundred, I suppose, in each case—of varying personality and from a wide range of territory, considering together various aspects of English study, without pedantry and without affectation.

It promises well for the future that teachers of English are finding places where they may come together in such a way. The Hamilton College school should count for a great deal in coming years. It fills a need.

There is a growing demand among teachers for training in the various phases of oral English—study of vocal technique, public speaking and argumentation, dramatics—as well as of literature considered with reference to oral expression, and the related branches of psychology. A reasonable mastery of these matters forms an essential part of the personal culture without which no teacher of English can do his best work.

Such study is carried on better in a special institution, if the quality of the instruction is good, than in the ordinary summer school with its multiplicity of interests. These subjects—voice training, oral composition, dramatics—help one another. The best results come, I am sure, where classes are not too large for every student to receive personal attention, and where students and instructors can associate together all day long, in a sort of family relation. The family must not be too small, however, nor the teachers too few nor too much alike. And since, with this important matter of expression there is always the lurking danger of dilettantism, it is well when the work can be carried on in regular college surroundings, with their background of dignity and scholarship.

I was impressed in the Hamilton classrooms—as at the Stratford Conference—by the combination of intellectual seriousness with a direct simplicity of manner. Professor Redmond's courses in public speaking utilized deftly the widely varying personal experiences of his students. Miss Grandy's work in oral composition was easily the best I have seen

in this new subject. Professor Heydrick's courses in literature, Miss Hilliard's in classroom dramatization, most of all Professor Lewis' in the peculiarly difficult subject of vocal technique, were noteworthy for their tranquil efficiency. It was not a nervous atmosphere. The students, I could see, had to work hard; they were learning, however, not the subject merely, but also how to teach it.

Summer schools of this sort will develop, I hope, in more than one American college. There is room for many of them. One may question, though, whether many will be able to reproduce the peculiar advantages of Hamilton College, with its long tradition of interest in oral English. I should like, for my own part, to see the Hamilton course somewhat broadened, to see more emphasis on the dramatic work, with some study of dancing and rhythm, the addition of courses in contemporary literature, and more of the interesting work in psychology. But the location is not easily to be paralleled for healthfulness and charm, the equipment, though that of a small college, is unusually good, and the team work of a decidedly varied group of instructors is a thing which takes time to develop.

JOHN M. CLAPP

NEW YORK CITY

THE TEACHER'S DESK

My desk must have its blossom every day—
A daffodil from the flower stall, or a rose
With fragrant folded heart; sometimes a spray
Of greenhouse pansies, soft as butterflies
Opening slowly through the busy hours.
My flowers were gay at heart, not grave nor wise,
Until I heard one whispered shy surmise,
"She has a lover, and he brings her flowers!"

My life must have its blossom. Yea, I know
Where single sprays and freshest buds are found—
Quaint little shops on corners, or the low
Thin roof of a greenhouse, blue in the wintry sun.
Ah, not unblessed my swift unhesitant hours!
Can I keep them sweet and fresh, one after one,
Till some shall whisper, when my day is done,
"Love must have found and crowned her. Lo—
these flowers!"

MARGARET SHERMAN